

Collected 1st July, 1902, and presented by C. W. Campbell, Esq., C.M.G.

This very handsome little species seems alone allied to *C. songarus*, Pall., and *C. dichrootis*, Sat., but may be readily distinguished from the former by its smaller ears and rather different colour, and from the latter by its more completely hairy soles and its prominent dorsal line.

XXXIX.—*The Affinities of the Orkney Vole* (*Microtus orcadensis*, Millais). By C. I. FORSYTH MAJOR.

IN a joint paper by Mr. Eagle Clarke and Professor Charnock Bradley are published some new and interesting observations on the Orkney vole discovered by Mr. Millais in the Orkneys and certain parts of Shetland*. I have had an opportunity to verify the accuracy of the facts communicated, but I venture to take exception to the interpretation given to these facts, as being intended to throw light on the affinities of the species. By representing the Orkney vole as being in some respects an intermediate form of the field- and the water-vole, but more nearly allied to the latter, a misleading conception of its true affinities is conveyed.

The two British species just mentioned are so widely apart from each other that they have been placed into two distinct sections (subgenera) of the genus *Microtus*. Now the Orkney vole, by its external characters (number of foot-pads on the hind sole, absence of abdominal musk-glands), as well as by the character of its teeth, is clearly a member of the same subgenus as the field-vole, and therefore much nearer related to the latter than to the water-vole. The peculiarities of its skull by no means contradict this statement. Great width of the skull, relative shortness of the brain-case, and elongation of the rostrum, are not peculiarities proper to the water-vole alone; they occur in other subgenera also. Within the subgenus to which our common field-vole (*M. agrestis*) belongs it is the *M. arvalis* and its allies, one of the field-voles of Continental Europe and Northern Asia, which the Orkney vole approaches most in the characters of

* "On the Vole and Shrew of the Orkney Islands," by Wm. Eagle Clarke. With Report by Prof. O. Charnock Bradley, M.B., C.M. (Reprinted from 'The Annals of Scottish Natural History,' January 1905.)

the skull. The teeth of the last-mentioned being, moreover, indistinguishable from those of the *M. arvalis* group, I would assign it a place within the latter, of which it is a large-sized and otherwise remarkable form, well deserving of a specific name of its own.

One form (possibly more) of a vole with teeth of the *M. arvalis* type is represented by jaws in some of our caves and river-deposits. Not having as yet come upon fairly complete skulls, I do not venture to assert that the species *M. arvalis* was represented in Great Britain during Pleistocene times; but the *M. arvalis* group certainly was. This last circumstance will in due time presumably help to explain satisfactorily the present existence of a member of the *M. arvalis* group in the Orkney and Shetland Islands.

XL.—*Description of a new Leucania from British New Guinea.* By GEORGE T. BETHUNE-BAKER, F.L.S., F.Z.S.

Leucania diagramma, sp. n.

♂. Head and face pale grey, barred with dark grey; collar pale grey, barred with darker grey; thorax greyish; patagia edged on its upper margin with dark grey; abdomen greyish; legs pale grey, mid and hind pair with two fine dark lateral lines. Primaries greyish brown, covered with fine whitish-grey longitudinal lines, with a broad pale stripe in the cell and a broader one below the cell; a dark spot at the lower end of the cell; a postmedial row of small dark spots, on the interior of which is a transverse indefinite band of whitish grey; termen darkly spotted: secondaries greyish, paler towards the base. Underside: primaries pale grey, with the dark lines of the upperside showing through; a dark costal spot a quarter from the apex; termen finely and darkly dotted: secondaries whitish grey, finely irrorated on the costa with dark scales; termen darkly spotted.

Expanse 38 mm.

The type is in my collection from Babooni, British New Guinea (3600 feet), where it flies in September.